REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 1-21 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as allegedly anticipated by Brown et al. '551 is respectfully traversed.

The presently claimed invention is concerned with duplicating objects over a network. Each computer system has a duplication master and a duplicate of a particular object. One of the duplicates is a duplicate master. The role of duplicate master can be swapped between the duplicates.

Brown discloses a word-processing program module having a multi-user editing capability provided by the utilization of a multi-user control file that is created when a document is accessed. This control file contains a copy of the master document along with a record file and is saved on a central server (column 22, lines 43 to 53). When a user on a remote computer accesses the document a user record file is created (column 11, line 66 to column 12, line 2) and a copy of the control file and of this user record is saved to the computer (column 12, lines 17 to 21). When a user saves the document the central server compares version numbers in the record files to allow updates to the control file (column 12, lines 39 to 60).

Thus Brown is similar to the description of prior art in the present application at paragraphs 25 and 26. If the control file is for any reason unavailable then the multi-user editing capability is not provided. This is in contrast to the claimed invention, where the role of master

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can be swapped between duplicated objects, either because the previous master becomes

unavailable or to provide load balancing across the network.

Thus, considering amended claim 1, Brown does not disclose apparatus including

memory that includes instructions to maintain data consistency between duplicated objects by

establishing a duplicate master, wherein the role of said duplicate master is switchable between

said duplicated objects. Accordingly, to the disclosure in Brown, it is not possible for the copy

65 on remote computer 49 of control file 60 to become the control file. When the control file 60

is unavailable, for example because file server 20 crashes, the control file is reconstructed from

the copies on the networked computers, as described at column 15, 49 to column 16, line 21.

There is no teaching that any of these copies temporarily becomes the control file. Thus Brown

does not anticipate (or suggest) amended claim 1.

Brown takes the prior art method that he describes at column 1, lines 12 to 45, which

allows only one user at a time to access a master document, and improves upon it by allowing

multi-user access. Further improvements upon Brown that might be suggested by a skilled man

would continue along this route of improving access to a master copy. There is no suggestion in

Brown of removing the centralized control file and making one of the copies a master copy, let

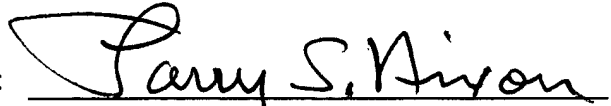alone allowing that role to be switched between the copies.

Accordingly, this entire application is now believed to be in allowable condition and a

formal Notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

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DIONNE et al.
Appl. No. 09/735,925
November 5, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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